

Gate Gourmet to Test Premium Brands for Sale Onboard United Airlines

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MEMPHIS, Tn, (04-22-03) - - Gate Gourmet now offers passengers the opportunity to purchase gourmet-style breakfast, lunch and dinner selections on certain United flights, as a part of a week-long test of its premium brands meal concept.

From April 21 through April 26, United Economy customers traveling on the seven daily flights between Denver and Seattle will be able to purchase Eli's Cheesecake Café signature meals on board the aircraft. These flights do not normally include meals.

"We're not serving the traditional airline food," said Henning Boysen, president and CEO of Gate Gourmet International. "These meals feature very generous portions and Eli's premium brands that passengers will recognize."

One of the eight offerings that customers can choose from is an Eli's grilled turkey pannini sandwich served on sliced challah bread, with a bowl of fresh fruit and an Eli's specialty chocolate chunk cookie. The meals, presented in large, gourmet-style baskets, range from \$7 for breakfast to \$10 for lunch and dinner.

Initially, customers will be able to purchase the meals with cash prior to the scheduled beverage service.

"Rather than purchasing food 'on the run' in the airport," explains Bill Dove, United's director Worldwide Catering, "customers will have the

opportunity to purchase restaurant-quality meals from the comfort of their seats. It's a convenience for our passengers and a new source of revenue for United and our catering partner, Gate Gourmet."

An independent survey commissioned by Gate Gourmet showed that the overwhelming majority of frequent business travelers would purchase a meal. A one-day test in March with United customers and flight attendants confirmed the popularity of this concept. Gate Gourmet will continue to seek frequent feedback from passengers to upgrade and enhance its product offerings.

"Our goal is to create a world class restaurant experience at 30,000 feet," said Americas Division President George Alvord.

Gate Gourmet is a world leader in direct-to-passenger meal programs offering the service first in Australia and expanding later to Europe. Gate Gourmet approached its major U.S. airline customers immediately after the events of September 11, 2001, with the concept to provide travelers the opportunity to purchase a meal as a value added option, if other meals are not available. The premium meal concept was developed in response to airlines reducing scheduled flights and the elimination of most in-flight meals on domestic flights.

"We are excited about partnering with our airline customers to provide a high-quality choice that the passengers prefer," said Alvord.

Gate Gourmet also launched a similar onboard sales concept with Delta's new airline, Song, on April 14. The response has been very positive.

Gate Gourmet is a world leader in airline catering. Its turnover in 2001 amounted to CHF 3.2 billion. With the world's most important airlines among its customers, Gate Gourmet caters for over 208 million passengers every year and employs a staff of about 25 000 in its 140 flight kitchens, located in 31 countries. Gate Gourmet is an international enterprise, with headquarters in Zurich, Switzerland, and branches on all continents.

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